2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

(2) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[83] from the head, face and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs.

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[84] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground

[83] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[84] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light.

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

F

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

198 apparently were once part of the ordinary language but by reason of their
192 becoming *pukimani* by one of the methods mentioned above have been dropped completely from everyday use and retained only in the memory of the older people until they are brought out again in some new song or substituted in the ordinary language for some word newly prohibited. The meaning then has to be explained to the younger people who have been born since the word formed part of the ordinary language.

It can easily be understood that in this mass of words handed down orally for centuries there are a number retained of which the meanings have been lost. For example it is quite impossible to obtain a word for word translation of any initiation song of the Tiwi, numbers of words being introduced which are totally meaningless alike to the singer, the maker of the song and to the audience. These words correspond to some extent to the "tra-la-la" or other nonsense syllables frequently found in modern American popular songs, being introduced to provide the correct rhythm or metre, to echo the sense of the song or for some conventional reason, certain meaningless words being exclusively found associated with other words, the meaning of which is known.

551 One of the favourite methods of coining names is to select one of these meaningless words and add one of the nominal suffixes mentioned above to it. Thus *matirandjiŋili* is a word frequently used in songs, the meaning of which is obscure. *Materandjiŋimirli* is, however, a proper name.

Place names are sometimes added to by a suffix or otherwise changed to become proper names. Thus *Pripaŋimili*, a district of South Bathurst, gives *Pripantimiri* a masculine name; *Poru*, the district opposite the mission station, gives rise to *Porutimiri* a male name and *Porutimiŋ* a female name. (It should be noted that there is no connection between such a name and the district of origin or residence of the person bearing the name.)

● 428 553 The commonest method of all is for the name to descend in the direct male line. That is, after the death of the father one of his sons (usually but not invariably the eldest) disregarding the name bestowed upon him by his mother's new husband, allows a sufficient time to elapse for the tabu to lose its efficacy and then assumes his father's name. This is done either of his own volition or by the older men of his horde who were the contemporaries of his father adopting the practice of using his

4: Hart E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 OI20 Tiwi OI20

father's name towards him and thus implying their approval of his taking that name. To select one example—there is at present in the Tiklowila horde a man *Pwandjilora* whose father was also a *Pwandjilora* who died about fifteen years ago. His father in turn was also a *Pwandjilora*, who is only remembered by the very old people of the horde.

This succession of names also takes place though to a very much lesser degree in the female line, that is from mother to daughter.

It must not be thought, however, that there is any such thing as private ownership of names by a family. A man but distantly related to *Pwandjilora II* would be quite at liberty to bestow that name upon one of his children were it not already in use and had a sufficient time elapsed since his death. An example is a famous warrior of the last generation called *Walitoami*. This name has recently been bestowed by one of the Tiklowila upon his son though neither he, the child, nor the mother of the child is closely related to the first *Walitoami*. As a matter of fact the child is the mother's brother's son's daughter's son of *Walitoami I*.

One or two other aspects of this subject may be dismissed briefly as they are more important in a study of kinship or ceremonial, than in a study of names as such.

A man may not in any circumstances use the name of the wife of another man, even the names of his brother's wives, without giving the husband a *casus belli*. A woman is a man's own property and the use of her name is an infringement of his property rights. In the same way a man's own name is his own property and cannot be used with impunity, at least in the presence of the owner of the name. In calling out to a person for instance, he will always be addressed by a kinship term, never by a personal name. This also is the manner by which the news of a death is carried to distant camps and the name of the dead man avoided, "your mother's brother at *Wilrangu* of the *Tjilarui* totem and the son of so and so is dead at *Brega*" being an example of how a relative is informed. The dead man is thenceforward referred to as "he who died recently at *Brega*."

There is another prohibition against the use by a husband of his own wife's name whilst she is in childbirth. For a couple of weeks before the birth and for a couple of weeks afterwards the husband must not look upon his wife, he cannot use any of her names, nor can any others of the tribe mention her either by name or by implication to him. Even such an